

Claim listing

1. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system ~~usable by facilitating a~~ number of participating players to play a multiplayer game, ~~comprising:- each participating player associated with a player station, a plurality of player stations, each player station being usable by a respective participating player to play a separate instance of a same single-player game having a plurality of possible results, the player station enabling the participating player to place a wager on an outcome of the multiplayer game; and comprising:~~

~~a gaming server and an administration facility communicable with each one of the plurality of player stations, wherein characterised in that the gaming server is operable to group the plurality of player stations into a single instance of a multi-player game in which each player plays an instance of the single player game, and wherein the administration facility is operable to determine an outcome of the multiplayer game as a function of the combined results of the separate instances of the single-player game played at the plurality of player stations, the outcome of the multiplayer game being either a favourable outcome if at least one participating player is determined by the administration facility as being a winner of the multiplayer game, or an unfavourable outcome in which none of the participating players is determined as being a winner.~~
2. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 1, ~~in which wherein~~ a single turn of the multiplayer game comprises at least one turn of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game played at a player station in use by a participating player.
3. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 2, ~~in which wherein~~ the administration facility determines an outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game only after completion of the at least one turn of the single-

player game in each separate instance of the single-player game for each participating player, respectively.

4. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 1, wherein any one of the preceding claims in which the administration facility awards a prize to the at least one winning player when the outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game is a favourable outcome.
5. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 4, in which wherein the administration facility accumulates, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account.
6. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 5, in which wherein the administration facility establishes a prize pool whose contents are a function of the outcomes of the separate instances of the single-player game played at the plurality of player stations.
7. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 6, in which wherein the prize awarded to the at least one winning player is one of the contents of the accumulation account, the contents of the accumulation account less a service fee retained by an operator of the multiplayer gaming system, and the contents of the prize pool, the contents of the accumulation account being retained by the operator of the gaming system to fund the prize pool.
8. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 7, in which wherein the contents of either one of the accumulation account and the prize pool are shared when the accumulation facility determines a plurality of winners in the turn of the multiplayer game.

9. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 1, wherein any one of the preceding claims in which any instance of the single-player game has a plurality of potential successful results, the plurality of successful results capable of being in ranked order, from least successful to most successful.
10. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 9, wherein in which the administration facility determines the at least one winner of a turn of the multiplayer game to be a participating player who obtains a highest-ranking successful result in a corresponding turn of a respective instance of the single-player game.
11. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 10, wherein in which the administration facility determines the outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game to be a tie when two or more participating players obtain a same highest-ranking successful result of the corresponding turn of their respective instances of the single-player game or when none of the participating players obtain a successful result of the corresponding turn of their respective instances of the single-player game.
12. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 11, wherein in which wherein the administration facility accumulates, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account, and wherein the administration facility determines the tie as an unfavourable outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game and carries over the contents of the accumulation account to a next turn of the multiplayer game.
13. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 11, wherein the administration facility accumulates, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account, and wherein in which the administration facility determines the tie as a

favourable outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game and causes the contents of the accumulation account to be shared between the tied players.

14. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 12, wherein ~~in which~~ the administration facility augments the contents of the accumulation account with player wagers from the next turn of the multiplayer game in the event of a carry over.

15. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 12, wherein ~~either one of claims 12 or 14 in which~~ the administration facility carries over the contents of the accumulation account to a next turn of the multiplayer game for a maximum of five consecutive ties.

16. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 15, wherein ~~in which~~ the administration facility automatically determines the outcome of a turn of the multiplayer game to be a favourable outcome upon the occurrence of a sixth consecutive tie.

17. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~any one of the preceding claims in which~~ each player station displays the progress of each instance of the single-player game played by a participating player.

18. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 2, wherein ~~in which~~ the at least one turn of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game comprising a single turn of the multiplayer game are played either sequentially or simultaneously.

19. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 5, wherein ~~any one of the preceding claims in which~~ each successful result of an instance of the single-player game is associated with a corresponding prize that is independent of the contents of the accumulation account.

20. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in ~~claim 19~~ claim 1, wherein any instance of the single-player game has a plurality of potential successful results, the plurality of successful results capable of being in ranked order, from least successful to most successful, and wherein ~~in~~ which the administration facility awards a prize to each participating player in the multiplayer game when a highest-ranking successful result occurs in a turn of an instance of the single-player game of any participating player.

21. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in ~~claim 19~~ claim 1, wherein any instance of the single-player game has a plurality of potential successful results, the plurality of successful results capable of being in ranked order, from least successful to most successful, and wherein ~~in~~ which the administration facility awards a prize to each participating player in the multiplayer game when any one of three highest-ranking successful results occurs in a turn of an instance of the single-player game of any participating player.

22. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in ~~either one of claims 20 or claim 21~~ in which wherein the administration facility accumulates, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account, and wherein the prizes awarded by the administration facility are independent of the contents of the accumulation account.

23. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~claimed in any one of the preceding claims~~ in which the single-player game has a bonus result, the occurrence of the bonus result in any instance of the single-player game enabling any one of:

(i) participation by the participating player in whose instance of the single-player game the bonus result occurred, in the next turn of the multiplayer game without requiring a wager,

(ii) payment by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system of a wager on behalf of the participating player in whose instance of the single player game the bonus result occurred, on the next turn of the multiplayer game, and (iii) an award of a monetary prize by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system to the participating player in whose instance of the single-player game the bonus result occurred.

24. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in ~~claim 2 in which claim 1, wherein~~ a single turn of the multiplayer game comprises a plurality of turns of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game played at a player station in use by a participating player.

25. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 24, ~~wherein in which~~ each successful result of the single-player game has an associated points value.

26. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 25, ~~wherein in which~~ the administration facility accumulates, for each participating player, points associated with any successful result occurring in that player's plurality of turns in that player's instance of the single-player game.

27. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 26, ~~wherein in~~ the administration facility determines the winner of the turn of the multiplayer game to be the participating player or participating players with the greatest accumulated point value.

28. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 27, ~~wherein the administration facility accumulates, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account, and wherein in which~~ the administration facility awards the winner of the turn of the multiplayer game the contents of the accumulation account or the

contents of the accumulation account less ~~the a~~ service fee retained by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system.

29. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 24,  
~~wherein any one of claims 24 to 28 in which~~ the administration facility requires each participating player to decide, prior to commencement of each of the plurality of turns in the single-player game, except the first, whether to continue with the multiplayer game by increasing that player's wager, or to withdraw from the turn of the multiplayer game.
30. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 29,  
~~wherein in which~~ the administration facility accumulates in ~~the an~~ accumulation account the cumulative wagers of all participating players.
31. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 30 in which the administration facility retains in the accumulation account the cumulative wagers of any player who withdraws from the turn of the multiplayer game.
32. (currently amended) A multiplayer gaming system as claimed in claim 1, wherein any one of the preceding claims in which the single-player game is any one of video slots, or video poker, or roulette.
33. (currently amended) A method of operation of a multiplayer gaming system, comprising the steps of:
  - enabling each one of a plurality of players to participate in a multiplayer game by playing a separate instance of a same single-player game having a plurality of possible results;
  - enabling each participating player to place a wager on an outcome of the multiplayer game; and

determining an outcome of the multiplayer game as a function of the combined results of the separate instances of the single-player game, the outcome of the multiplayer game being either a favourable outcome if at least one participating player is determined as being a winner of the multiplayer game, or an unfavourable outcome in which none of the participating players is determined as being a winner.

34. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 33, wherein that includes a step of including in a single turn of the multiplayer game comprises at least one turn of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game played by each participating player.
35. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 34, wherein in which an outcome of a turn of the multiplayer game is determined only after completion of the at least one turn of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game for each participating player, respectively.
36. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any one of claims 33 to 35~~ claim 33, wherein in which a prize is awarded to the at least one winning player when the outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game is a favourable outcome.
37. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 33, further comprising any one of claims 36 that includes the step of accumulating, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account.
38. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 37, wherein in which a prize pool is established in which the contents are a function of the outcomes of the separate instances of the single-player game.

39. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 36-38, wherein in which the prize awarded to the at least one winning player is one of (a) the contents of the accumulation account, (b) the contents of the accumulation account less a service fee retained by an operator of the multiplayer gaming system, or (c) the contents of a prize pool, the contents of the accumulation account being retained by the operator of the gaming system to fund the prize pool.

40. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 39 in which 38, wherein the contents of either one of the accumulation account and the prize pool are shared between a plurality of winners when the accumulation facility determines a plurality of winners in the turn of the multiplayer game.

41. (currently amended) A method as claimed in any one of claims 33 to 40 in which claim 33, wherein any instance of the single-player game has a plurality of potential successful results, the plurality of successful results capable of being ranked in order, from least successful to most successful.

42. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 41, wherein in which the at least one winner of a turn of the multiplayer game is determined to be a participating player who obtains a highest-ranking successful result in a corresponding turn of a respective instance of the single-player game.

43. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 42 in which 41, wherein the outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game is determined to be a tie when two or more participating players obtain a same highest-ranking successful result of the corresponding turn of their respective instances of the single-player game, or when none of the participating players obtains a successful result of the corresponding turn of their respective instances of the single-player game.

44. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 43, further comprising the step of accumulating, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the

participating players in an accumulation account and wherein in which the tie is determined as an unfavourable outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game and the contents of the accumulation account are carried over to a next turn of the multiplayer game.

45. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 43 further comprising the step of accumulating, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account and wherein in which the tie is determined as a favourable outcome of the turn of the multiplayer game and the contents of the accumulation account are shared between the tied players.
46. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 44, wherein in which the contents of the accumulation account are augmented with player wagers from the next turn of the multiplayer game in the event of a carry over.
47. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~either one of claims 44 or 46 in which~~ claim 46, wherein the contents of the accumulation account are carried over to a next turn of the multiplayer game for a maximum of five consecutive ties.
48. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 47, wherein in which the outcome of a turn of the multiplayer game is automatically determined as a favourable outcome upon the occurrence of a sixth consecutive tie.
49. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any one of claims 33 to 48 in which~~ claim 33, wherein the progress of each instance of the single-player game played by all the participating players is displayed to each participating player.
50. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 34, wherein in which the at least one turn of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-

player game comprising a single turn of the multiplayer game are played either sequentially or, ~~alternatively~~, simultaneously.

51. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 37, further comprising the step of accumulating, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account and wherein in which each successful result of an instance of the single-player game is associated with a corresponding prize that is independent of the contents of the accumulation account.
52. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 51, wherein in which a prize is awarded to each participating player in the multiplayer game when a highest ranking successful result occurs in a turn of an instance of the single-player game of any participating player.
53. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 51, wherein any instance of the single-player game has a plurality of potential successful results, the plurality of successful results capable of being in ranked order, from least successful to most successful, and wherein in which a prize is awarded to each participating player in the multiplayer game when any one of three highest-ranking successful results occurs in a turn of an instance of the single-player game of any participating player.
54. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 53, wherein either one of claims 52 or 53 in which the prizes are awarded independently of the contents of the accumulation account.
55. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 53, wherein any one of claims 33 to 54 in which the single-player game has a bonus result, the occurrence of the bonus result in any instance of the single-player game enabling any one of:
  - (i) participation by the participating player in whose instance of the single-player

game the bonus result occurred, in the next turn of the multiplayer game without requiring a wager,

(ii) payment by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system of a wager on behalf of the participating player in whose instance of the single player game the bonus result occurred, on the next turn of the multiplayer game, and  
(iii) an award of a monetary prize by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system to the participating player in whose instance of the single-player game the bonus result occurred.

56. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 33, wherein 34 in which a single turn of the multiplayer game comprises a plurality of turns of the single-player game in each separate instance of the single-player game played by each participating player.

57. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 56, wherein in which a point value is associated with each successful result of the single-player game.

58. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 57, wherein in which points associated with any successful result occurring in that player's plurality of turns in that player's instance of the single-player game are accumulated, for each participating player.

59. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 58, wherein in which the winner of the turn of the multiplayer game is determined to be the participating player, or participating players, with the greatest accumulated point value.

60. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 59, further comprising the step of accumulating, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account and wherein in which the winner of the turn of the multiplayer game is awarded the contents of the accumulation

account or the contents of the accumulation account less the service fee retained by the operator of the multiplayer gaming system.

61. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 56, wherein in any one of claims 56 to 60 in which each participating player is required to decide, prior to commencement of each of the plurality of turns in the single-player game, except the first, whether to continue with the multiplayer game by increasing that player's wager, or to withdraw from the turn of the multiplayer game.
62. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 61 further comprising the step of accumulating, in each separate turn of the multiplayer game, all wagers by the participating players in an accumulation account and wherein in which the cumulative wagers of all participating players and the cumulative wagers of any player who withdraws from the turn of the multiplayer game are accumulated in the accumulation account.

Specification amendment

At page 1, line 10, below the title, insert the following paragraph:

Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 365, priority is claimed to PCT/IB2004/003179 filed September 30, 2004, and to the prior British applications GB 0323072.9 filed October 2, 2003 and GB 0325312.7 filed October 30, 2003.

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 17 line 20 and ending at page 18 line 5 with the following text:

Each computer workstation (4) is a conventional personal computer operating under a Windows 2000 operating system, which is well known and commercially available from the Microsoft Corporation of RedmondSeattle, Washington, USA. The gaming server (2) operates under the Windows NT operating system. The stored workstation program (not shown) and the corresponding stored server program will be referred to, for convenience, as a client process and a server process, respectively. The server process generates one or more random events that determine the outcome of the multiplayer slots game, such as determining the outcomes of spins of the reels in the various single-player video slots games of the participating players. The client process of any particular computer workstation (4) obtains the result of the random events from the gaming server (2), along the communication network (9) and displays the outcome of the game on the display monitor (5) of the workstation in an intelligible manner, by causing the player's set of slots reels to spin and to come to rest at a position corresponding to the outcome. In order to play the game of multiplayer slots from any particular computer workstation (4), the client process (not shown) must first be downloaded to that computer workstation from the gaming server (2) or,

alternatively from a separate web server (not shown), and then installed on the workstation.